



## May 2026 Newsletter



**IHS mentor Kevin and his buddy**

### ***Mentor***

I started my mentorship with Athletes for Kids in my junior year of high school, and I've had nothing but fun with my buddy. Joining the program was a little nerve-wracking at first since I didn't really know what to expect, but the moment I met my buddy, all those nerves disappeared. Our usual Sunday hangouts are always something I look forward to each week. These last few years of high school can be really stressful, so having a friend who supports you and shares fun experiences with you is something I'm truly grateful for.

My match with my buddy has helped me grow in many ways. He's brought out a creative side in me that I didn't know I had, whether that's drawing made-up characters or creating storylines. I think we have over 100 loose papers filled with Skibidi Toilet drawings, haha. We've also tried so many new things

together, and I feel like I've seen him grow every time we meet. Whether it's trying bubble tea for the first time or learning how to ice skate, watching him step out of his comfort zone has inspired me to do the same and try new things in my own life. If there's one thing my buddy has taught me, it's to always have fun and that it's okay to ask for help. Even though I'm a mentor, I sometimes find myself being mentored too, which has been a really meaningful part of this experience.

I'm really excited to see what the future has in store for my buddy. Even though I'll be in college, I'll always be cheering him on. I'm hoping to finish this school year strong by going on even more adventures together. I also want to thank Athletes for Kids for this amazing opportunity. I've made so many great friends through the program and built a strong sense of community, both with my buddy and with other mentors.

***Mentee Parents***

We've really appreciated the mentorship between Kevin and our son this year. Their time together has been something our son really looks forward to, and it's been wonderful to see him so happy and laughing during their time together.

A highlight of their visits has been drawing and doing cartoons together—our son especially enjoys these moments, and while Kevin does most of the drawing, it's become a shared activity that brings them both a lot of joy.

Kevin has also been very patient and flexible on days when our son is having a harder time, always meeting him with kindness and understanding. They've also enjoyed getting ice cream together on a few occasions, which has been a highlight. We're very grateful for the positive connection they've built.

**WA GiveBIG 2026**

**GIVE  BIG 2026**  
POWERED BY 501 COMMONS

**Your support helps us continue to create impactful mentorships!** ★ ★ ★

We are participating in the annual statewide GiveBIG campaign! On May 5<sup>th</sup>, thousands of people will show their support for their favorite WA nonprofits during GiveBIG. Your contribution will help us grow our mission to **impact lives, one mentorship at a time.**

Early giving is now open! Click the button below to donate and help us reach our goal. Even small donations will make a big difference for children with special needs and the high school athletes who mentor them.

**Click Here to Donate**

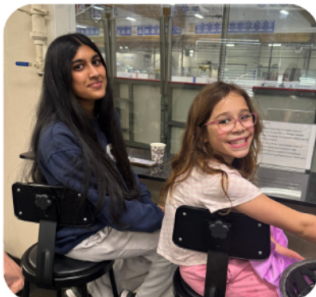
## With Gratitude

# SNO-KING ICE ARENAS

### Thank you to Sno-King Ice Arena, Kirkland

A huge thank you to Sno-King of Kirkland and a special shout-out to Lisa Ware and Stacy O'Daffer for an unforgettable day at the second annual AFK skating event. We truly appreciate your efforts in organizing such a fantastic experience for mentors and buddies. The joy on their faces was priceless, and the opportunity to spend a Saturday afternoon in such a fun and engaging environment was wonderful. We are grateful for the continued support of the program and the chance to partner with you again next year. Your dedication makes a difference, and we look forward to more events in the future.

## AFK Moments



As we reflect on a month of memories, we look forward to more mentorship moments and embracing acceptance, friendship, and kindness every day.

[Donate Now](#)

**CONTACT US  
MAY CALENDAR  
VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION**

**FOLLOW US**

